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Appl. No. : 10/693,663
Filed : October 24, 2003

AUG 18 2006

REMARKS

Applicant initially would like to thank Examiners Swiger and Robert for the courtesies extended Applicant's representatives at the interview held on August 8, 2006, summarized above.

Claims 1-18 were pending in this application. Claims 1, 8, 13, and 14 are amended herein. New Claims 19-28 are added herein. No new matter is added. Accordingly, Claims 1-28 are presented herein for consideration.

Claim Rejections

The rejection of Claims 1-4 and 8-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) set forth in the Office Action is improper. At the interview, the Examiners agreed to withdraw this rejection.

Claims 6-7 and 14-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of the combination of U.S. Patent No. 6,530,926 ("Davison") and U.S. Patent No. 6,485,518 ("Cornwall"). It was discussed at the interview that the combination may also apply to Claim 1.

Applicant does not agree that the combination is applicable to these claims. However, Claims 1 and 14 have been amended to further distinguish this combination to expedite allowance. Applicant respectfully submits that even if the combination of Davison and Cornwall were appropriate, such a combination would not teach or suggest all of the limitations of independent Claims 1 and 14 as amended. For at least this reason, amended Claims 1 and 14 are patentably distinguished over the proposed combination of references, and Applicant respectfully requests allowance of amended Claims 1 and 14. Applicant reserves the right to argue the appropriateness of the combination of Davison and Cornwall in a future paper.

Claims 2-13 and Claims 15-18 depend from independent Claim 1 and independent Claim 14, respectively, and include all the limitations of the respective base claims in combination with additional limitations. For at least the reason discussed above with respect to Claims 1 and 14, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 2-13 and 15-18 are patentably distinguished over the proposed combination of Davison and Cornwall and respectfully requests allowance of Claims 2-13 and 15-18.

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New Claims

Applicant has added new Claims 19-28 to claim additional aspects of Applicant's invention. Claim 23 corresponds to original Claim 10, including the limitations of original Claims 1, 8, and 10. Applicant respectfully submits that these claims are not taught or suggested by the cited art. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to allow new Claims 19-28.

SUMMARY

Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 1-28 are in condition for allowance. Any remarks in support of patentability of one claim should not be imputed to any other claim, even if similar terminology is used, because patentability rests on each claim taken as a whole. Applicant respectfully traverses each of the Examiner's rejections and each of the Examiner's assertions regarding what the prior art shows or teaches, even if not expressly discussed herein. Although changes to the claims have been made, no acquiescence or estoppel is or should be implied thereby; such amendments are made only to expedite prosecution of the present application and are without prejudice to the presentation or assertion, in the future, of claims relating to the same or similar subject matter.

Applicant respectfully requests that a Notice of Allowance be issued at the earliest opportunity.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

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By: 

Andrew M. Douglas
Registration No. 51,212
Attorney of Record
Customer No. 20,995
(949) 760-0404

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